THE MISTAKES OF PACIFISM

OR

Why a Christian can have anything to do with War.

BY

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PREFACE

It goes without saying that the following pages will be termed 'controversial'; and by many Christians who ignore the contents of the New Testament, 'controversy'—which is really nothing but rational and necessary discussion—is pronounced unspiritual, if not actually unchristian. I regret this attitude, because it is not only unwarranted, but is a real obstacle to right understanding. I have been deeply grieved, times without number, under the stigma which is intended when one is called a 'controversialist.' But it would be cowardly to let pain keep one back from duty, and I cannot apologize for trying to do what Jesus Himself and the Apostles were always doing. It may be said with truth, that since the Christian era began, there has never been so critical an hour as the present, for religion, even as for politics and sociology. Paul's words seem to be far more applicable to modern Europe than to ancient Corinth—'Watch, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all you do be done in love.' It is a high and therefore difficult ideal. I can but say with all sincerity, that I have tried to hold both portions of it equally in mind. The greatest lesson of the day appears to be that the modern Christian who does not keep both of these, keeps neither.

F. B.

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THE MISTAKES OF PACIFISM

I
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In a northern city, quite recently, a well-known church member was found one Sunday morning turning his steps at service time away from rather than towards the church to which he belonged, and when questioned by a friend as to the explanation of his action, he replied that he did not 'want to hear any more about the war,' but was 'going to study the Bible.' This sounds plausibly pious, but it does not bear calm scrutiny. We have all heard far more than enough about the war. Alas, there is neither help nor hope in shutting eyes and ears to its dire realities. If diphtheria should appear in a comfortable home and medical science trace it to foul drains, the householder who simply declared that he was tired of hearing about drains, and wished to study hygiene, would be regarded either as insane or as a menace to the community. It is no less true, even yet, that what is needed on almost all hands, is not less discussion, but more, as to the fearful scourge which is working such havoc in

modern Europe. It is strange but true, that even now, after twelve months of misery and horror, there are vast numbers in this country who do not apprehend the gravity of the situation. It has become a commonplace that there has been no such colossal struggle in the world's history. But commonplaces, as Tennyson reminds us, have a way of becoming 'vacant.' This is no exception. The nearest approach to the present crisis occurred just a century ago. But even Napoleon's war-cloud was less threatening in its deadly danger than the German demand to subject all Europe, if not the world, to its conceited 'kultur'; together with the fearful opportunity which long years of secret and determined preparation have given their army to enforce it.

Beyond all question the menace is so great, that even if we waive European interests, and consider this country only, there is pressing need of absolute unity of conviction and of purpose, if all that is best in our midst is to be conserved, and all that is worst in German ambitions is to be prevented. We have partly overcome, or are overcoming, some hindrances. Drink, lazy indifference, self-interest, confusion, have been to some extent disposed of. But much yet remains to be done even in these directions. If the British Government had had the courage to do with alcohol as Russia did with vodka, and France with absinthe, and if *all* the eligible young men in the country had done as nobly as many have, we should now be measurelessly better able to meet the foe.

Meanwhile, that foe is absolutely of one mind and purpose. The people have, we know, been fed

upon lies, by their Government and teachers. But with the sole exception of some Socialists, and their one brave paper, *Vorwärts*, the lies have become truth to the German nation, by being believed. They do seriously believe that England has planned and brought about this war, out of sheer envy and desire to destroy the 'Fatherland.' The world now knows differently; but the average German soldier does not. He is utterly convinced that he is defending his native land against relentless foes. Hence the German folk are not only unashamed at, but actually rejoice in, all the abominable atrocities, damnable crimes, and dastardly devices, by means of which their hosts have trampled ruthlessly on all 'honourable' war, and have endorsed their statesmen's reckless declaration to the whole modern world, that for them there is no right nor wrong. There is only one thing to be considered, and that is 'Deutschland über alles.' It is therefore all too plain that the Allies have to deal with a deluded and infuriated nation. Hence arises, at the very outset, a double indictment of 'Pacifism.'

(1) Any influence whatever which tends to weaken this country's endeavour to do its share in meeting such a menace, is playing into the hands of the immoral Prussian militarism which is now cursing humanity by its disciplined might.

(2) Seeing, then, that the Allies neither can nor dare, nor ever will yield, until this hydra-headed monster is effectually crippled, if not destroyed, everything that weakens their hands is helping to prolong the present frightful slaughter, with all its attendant miseries.

Two such considerations are in themselves sufficient to justify a calm and clear, though strong, protest against persistent teachings which would divide our nation just when, as never before in our history, we needed to be absolutely united.

But there is yet another reason, of even greater force from the standpoint of these pages, viz. that this same Pacifism is not only a real enemy at this juncture to the welfare of our nation, but to the whole Christian faith. If it could be demonstrated that in such a world-crisis as this, when a powerful nation which has been definitely preparing for war during the last forty years, and secretly for this war during the last six, breaks through all truth and honour to precipitate it; commits atrocities which would make devils blush for shame; seeks to poison the brave men whom it cannot crush; ruthlessly murders innocent men, women, and children; floods the world with lies and plots to an extent never before known—if Christianity meant that all other nations should do *nothing but submit* to such vile doings, and allow these miscreants to attain their evil purposes unopposed, such a religion would deserve to be swept off the face of the earth. When any man—or nation—allows a murder to be done which he could prevent, he becomes himself a murderer. To take three words out of the New Testament as Tolstoi did, and make them the basis of a complete, world-wide, age-long, unconditional system of morals, is childish, to say the least, and deadly delusion to speak the truth. If—in the crass literalness assumed—'Resist not evil' is to be taken as the watchword of a faith, then that faith could only breed the greatest

enemies of mankind. Even if it were true—which it is not—that Pacifism is the only logical deduction from the 'Sermon on the Mount,' it has been well said by Canon Streeter that 'the business of a Christian is to work out, not the logic of a phrase, but the redemption of the world.'

In order to arrive at a better understanding of what Christianity really involves, in view of a fearful crisis like the present, as against the well-meant but mistaken and mischievous suggestions of Pacifism, four matters demand attention.

(I.) It is most necessary to face the plain facts of the present international situation.

(II.) What Pacifism means and involves, must be clearly understood.

(III.) Wherein it is false, misleading, and dangerous, must be plainly shown.

(IV.) The true Christian attitude must be stated, at least in summary.

II

THE PLAIN FACTS TO BE FACED

So long as men are sane they must have regard to facts. Neither poetry nor pietism can enable us to live on air, or walk on water. That human nature is as it is, and does what it does, are actualities from which no imaginations of belief or unbelief can enable us to escape. When the latter cynically demands why Christianity and the Churches do not stop the war, the insincerity of the query is at once manifest when we ask in reply—Why does not all the goodness in Britain stop all the badness? If it be sincerely inquired why Christianity has not prevented this and all other wars, since the first century, the simple but sufficient answer is, Because human nature would not let it. 'How often would I'—said Christ Himself—'and ye would not.' That is also the true and sufficient reply to the further query—'If God be all good and all powerful, why does He not intervene and stop all this dreadful carnage?' Whatever else such an inquiry may be, it is at least nineteen centuries too late. For, assuredly, if it were ever to be expected that God would contradict Himself, in annihilating the moral being whose freedom not even omnipotence can compel, it should have been at Calvary, when His

dearly-beloved Son was done to death by Jewish and Roman murderers.

From the necessarily uncontrolled and uncontrollable activities of human nature, working on the lines of modern 'kultur,' has arisen the following situation, which no amount of the sincerest faith can resolve into mere fancy.

(1) War on the most stupendous and ghastly scale the world has ever seen, is now raging on the Continent of Europe.

(2) It was precipitated upon Europe, after prolonged, treacherous, complete preparation, by Germany.[1]

(3) It has been waged from the beginning until now—when the latest exploit of German savages has been the firing upon drowning seamen with machine guns and shrapnel—with absolute disregard not only for all the ordinary conventions of 'honourable' warfare, but for every consideration of right or wrong, age or sex, pity or chivalry, honour or dishonour. In well-known cases not only has there been deliberately-planned, cold-blooded wholesale murder, but the whole nation has rejoiced at such colossal crimes, and cries aloud for more of the same kind.

(4) Into this frightful struggle, against our will, and—like all the Allies—in a state of general unpreparedness, this country has been compelled to enter, on pain of forfeiting truth and honour, as well as of imperilling our own national existence.

[1] For this and the other affirmations here made, I must refer to the various official records of this country, of Russia, and of France, together with a host of other works now issued, especially by the Oxford University Press; as also to my own summary entitled *Britain Justified* (C. H. Kelly).

(5) In spite of such a widespread, persistent, heavily-bribed campaign of lies as the world has never known before, all the neutral nations are well aware upon which side are to be found truth, justice, liberty, and hope for the maintenance of all that is worth cherishing in civilization.

(6) There is no sign as yet of the war's coming to a close. The alleged German desires for an 'honourable' peace, are but brazen impudence adding insult to injury—sinister feelers put forth with a view to escaping as far as possible the due consequences of her crime, as well as retaining some of the ill-gotten gains of her brutal might.

(7) The nature and attitude of the enemy we have to encounter are manifest, from the days immediately preceding the outbreak of war, until now. They admit of being characterized in a sentence—viz. that 'necessity knows no law.' The 'necessity' is, that Germany should triumph, and rule over all the other nations of Europe, if not also the whole world. To accomplish that aim, and compel all other countries to become its vassals, and subject to its 'kultur,' *anything* is lawful. 'It was wrong, but we had to do it.' Such is the German Chancellor's confession before the world. Everything thus is right which German statesmen and war-lords deem necessary. The policy of 'frightfulness'—which includes wholesale dastardly massacre of innocent people, with damnable outrages upon women, treatment of children which savages would scorn, smashing and burning of venerable cathedrals, and immeasurable looting of private houses, i.e. unmitigated robbery—is a distinctly-intended and definitely-commanded part of the

German method. And more; it is approved as such by the Professors of philosophy and theology at the universities, and so, following their lead, by the whole nation.

(8) The highly-organized system of technical education in Germany, with its multitude of scientific experts, has enabled them to carry into their utterly reckless and desperate campaign, such knowledge and skill in the use of new cruel and deadly methods as has never before been imagined.

(9) The intention of the German nation is unmistakable. In the words of the virulent Count von Reventlow—Von Tirpitz's mouthpiece:—

> Germans will do much more than persevere. They will fight until everything complies with their will—a will that vehemently and *without scruple* puts *all means* into its service by which it desires to arrive at its aim. Any termination of the war except by German victory is unthinkable.

So too Professor von Leyden, of Berlin:—

> Germany must and will stand alone. The Germans are the salt of the earth; they will fulfil their destiny, which is to rule the world and to control other nations for the benefit of mankind.

(10) The issues at stake are unmistakable. As Dr. J. W. White says:—

> Germany and her more or less insignificant and contemptible tools, Austria and Turkey, represent absolutism, militarism, mediaevalism, despotism, autocracy. The Allies are fighting for democratic liberty, for representative government, for the equal rights of individuals, whether relatively insignificant persons, or relatively powerless States.

(11) Hence the welfare not only of Europe but of all modern humanity, is at stake. The utter failure of the German ideals for the people beyond Europe, is shown in the general collapse of German colonies. Their boasted 'kultur,' instead of being advanced civilization, has shown itself to be nothing more than retrogression to clever and disciplined savagery. In every case the 'natives' hail with thankfulness their deliverance, by British or other naval and military forces, from the German tyranny. It is not too much to say that the fate of the world turns upon the issues of this war.

(12) For a homicidal maniac, words are useless. The least that the tenderest as well as wisest philanthropy can do for him, is to bind him into impotence. The padded room for a raging lunatic, is the truest expression of the utmost benevolence, and the only way to 'love' him. The mighty nation which now rages in desperate fury against the Allies, is really a mad nation warring against the wellbeing of humanity. In its aims, its determinations, its methods, it has constituted itself the enemy of the human race, and must be dealt with accordingly.

III

THE MEANING OF PACIFISM

'War is hell,' said General Sherman—who knew. All wars are really disastrous, inhuman, unchristian. In all cases of evil, prevention is better than cure. But when it is too late to prevent, something must be done to try to cure. The present war is the modern Minotaur, and the immediate problem is not whence or how its ghastly scourge arose, but what must be done to stop its bloody career, and to prevent its ever returning. It matters only secondarily which way a mad dog comes, or how its madness arose. The first and absolutely necessary thing is to stop it. That is exactly the present European situation. Inasmuch as all war is, in the abstract, i.e. in ideal, unchristian, it is easily said that the Church ought to have prevented this war—or at least ought now to stop it. There are many and sufficient reasons for pronouncing both these demands irrational, unjust, and unwarranted. But in not a few quarters just now, one reason is said to be supreme, viz. that Christianity is not Christian, and that the Churches—in so far as they have any share in or sympathy with this country's present attitude—are not true to Christ. If, it is said, we were, as Christians, only true to Him, this

and all other such calamities would certainly be obviated. Such is the one contention which alone is contemplated in these pages. It deserves careful consideration because of the sincerity of those who are seeking to propagate it. It needs scrutiny because of the mischief and danger associated with it. It has long found its strongest expression amongst the Society of Friends—or 'Quakers.' But during recent years it has been based largely upon the teachings of Tolstoi, who made the three words attributed to Jesus—'Resist not evil'—the very pivot and substance of Christianity in general. Leaving the history of the doctrine, it is most necessary at the present juncture to take an authoritative statement, in its best form, of what this Pacifism, or 'Christian non-resistance,' really means, so that we may estimate aright its relation to Christ's Gospel as represented in the whole of the New Testament, and its suitability as a means of ending the calamity which is now blasting Europe.

The best summary of 'Christian non-resistance'—which is here taken as synonymous with Pacifism—is found in the Catechism compiled by Dr. Darby, and issued by 'The Peace Society.' There are, of course, many other statements to the same effect, but they occur mostly in public addresses, and letters to newspapers, to which reference is difficult. Although pages are not given, the substance of what is affirmed in the above Catechism, is accurately summarized as follows :—

(1) Pacifism—the shorter term for 'Christian non-resistance'—is the sum and substance of the meaning and purpose of Christ's whole Gospel on this earth.

(2) Jesus meant His words—' Resist not evil '—to be taken literally. As such, they mean what here follows.

(3) No Christian may resist evil by any kind of force which would in any way injure any one whatever.

(4) He may never defend even his own life, if so doing would injure his would-be murderer.

(5) He may never defend from injury or death or outrage, any member of his family, if so doing would hurt the intending outrager or murderer.

(6) He may not apply to any magistrate for such help as would use any kind of force to injure the robber, or hooligan, or villain.

(7) He may not take part in any war, under any conditions whatever.

(8) He may, therefore, have nothing whatever to do with recruiting, or gathering force on his nation's behalf, no matter what the peril or the contingency.

(9) He may not use any weapons of any kind whatever, under any pretext whatever.

(10) He may never become a soldier, under any conditions.

(11) He may never be a chaplain, or an officer of any kind, in any army.

(12) He may not be associated with any Government which would either inflict or threaten any physical punishment, for any offence whatever.

(13) Jesus Himself not only directly taught all this, but gave Himself up to death simply and solely to testify to the principle of non-resistance. ' He simply died because He would not resist evil-doers.'

(14) There is only one method of saving the world, and that is non-resistance.

(15) This Pacifism is not merely the 'vital principle' and 'necessary truth' of the whole New Testament, but 'the Christian revelation closes' with a 'series of Apocalyptic visions,' the purport of which is to seal and support this same principle.

We are further assured that the argument in favour of this doctrine, may be extended indefinitely. This is doubtless true. It is equally true of any and every species of pietism or fanaticism. Plymouth-Brethrenism, Christadelphianism, Millenarian-Dawnism, Eddyism, Theosophy—to say nothing of Romanism, Calvinism, and other forms of doctrine which are utterly opposed to Pacifism—will all be found capable of indefinite extension in their arguments. We may, therefore, dismiss such a suggestion as irrelevant.

What we have to do as sincere Christians who have neither right nor power—even if we had desire—to cease to be British citizens, or human beings, is to inquire frankly whether Jesus did really teach all this. That is, whether such conclusions, with their consequent effect upon behaviour, are so really definitely and unmistakably Christian principles, that all who decline to accept them are necessarily unchristian, and responsible for the failure of Christianity to prevent, or to end, the prevailing horrors of war. The plain answer here given to such an inquiry is an emphatic negative. It will be noted that nothing is here said against Pacifists, beyond what Paul had to say concerning certain fanatics of his day—'I bear them witness

that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.'[1]

Inasmuch, however, as many Pacifists have not only a right to be considered sincere, but also lay large claim to intelligence, it is the more necessary to state definitely the reasons for saying (i.) that this strongly-asserted doctrine is not Christ's teaching; nor that of the Apostles. Also (ii.) that besides being definitely unchristian, it involves consequences which would be, if it were carried out, fatal alike to Christian principles, to general morality, and to the progress of humanity.

(1) At the outset, there is no Christian warrant whatever for the assumption of superior knowledge and devotion which characterizes the general attitude of Pacifism. The strong assertion that 'it is enjoined by Jesus Christ, and is both the effective method and force of the Christian religion,' proves nothing, save the opinion of the asserter. Others may differ entirely from this conclusion, and yet be equally genuine in their belief in Christ's doctrine and lordship.

(2) Nor is anything gained for truth by the common practice of seeking to make impression, if not to silence all discussion, by smart epigrams or question-begging similes which have no real bearing upon the question in hand. It seems necessary to give examples of this, because to some minds such suggestions are very plausible, and so far effective. The names of the authors are irrelevant. All the quotations are genuine, and are taken from public pleas for Pacifism.

[1] Or as Dr. Moffatt tersely puts it—'I can vouch for their zeal for God, only it is not zeal with knowledge' (Rom. x. 2).

'Some of us lay great faith in spades, and refuse to trust in Dreadnoughts.'

'I become apostate when I take another man's life in my hand.'

'How can a man love his enemy, and shoot him at the same time?'

'Can we imagine Christ clad in khaki leading His battalion into a bayonet charge?'

'Unless Christ can be my leader in such a momentous struggle, then no longer can He be a perfect guide.'

'Are we really to believe that the expulsion of the money-changers justifies all the devilry of war?'

'I utter no apology for Germany, but neither will I call a Christian blessing upon the sins of my own land.'

'So long as Christian people condone each war as it arises, war and the preparation for war will continue to flourish.'

'The Church asserts that her trust is in God, and then when emergency arises she relies on the sword. That is her crowning reproach.'

So, then, according to this last writer, when Paul in the midst of shipwreck pointed out to the captain the coward sailors who were seeking to escape, and said, 'Except these men abide in the ship ye cannot be saved,' it was his crowning reproach that he relied on sailors and ship's tackle, when he ought rather to have bidden them stand still, careless of everything, like babes—or imbeciles—and leave God to do all on their behalf.

But it would be wearisome to point out one by one the shallow and indeed unworthy fallacies which mar every one of these—and many other such—attempts to snatch a point by evasion or misrepresentation. It is a poor cause that requires such support.

(3) The principle which was most rigidly enforced

by Tolstoi, but is practically involved in Pacifism —of basing the whole gospel on 'non-resistance,' and non-resistance upon 'the injunction, But I say unto you, Resist not evil'—is both false and mischievous. To affirm that this literal and unconditional non-resistance is 'the principle involved and the duty enjoined in our Saviour's precept,' and that whoever does not so regard and obey it, 'is outside the kingdom,' is not warranted by any fair treatment of the New Testament.

(4) Indeed, the whole practice here illustrated is mischievous, viz. the laying of unmeasured emphasis upon some small picked portion or passage, to the entire ignoring of the context. In the present case it is doubly exhibited. First, the 'Sermon on the Mount' is isolated from the rest of the New Testament, with more or less pronounced intimations that all else in Gospels or Epistles is of small account. Then, as regards these same three chapters of Matthew, three words are cut out, stuck upon a pedestal apart from all the rest, and made the one sole foundation and sufficient test of Christian reality. Such a procedure may be as sincerely endorsed by some avowed Christians as was the massacre of St. Bartholomew; or the burning of witches; or the keeping of slaves, and other lamentable errors, all of which can be justified by isolated passages. But it involves the ruination of Christianity. No genuine Christian doctrine or principle, whatever, rests upon an isolated passage, any more than a house, fit for human habitation, is ever founded upon a single stone.

(5) Furthermore, the inferences which Pacifism

draws from its Scripture supports, are by no means always warranted. It is a favourite practice, for instance, to quote as quite conclusive, that Jesus said, 'All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' Here, 'shall perish' is interpreted as a definite threat, attached as a punishment to all warfare. But it is really nothing of the kind. It is the usual confusion between 'shall' and 'will' which makes both the 'Authorized' Version and the Revised, often equally misleading. There is, in this particular case, no imperative, threatening, 'shall' at all, but simply a general reminder—following upon the request to Peter to put away his sword—that those who fight with material weapons run the risk of their lives, which He did not then wish them to do. Even as He said, shortly afterwards, to Pilate that His kingdom was not one for which He wished His servants to fight. This is a true and plain principle. But it is altogether another thing from the literal and wholesale insistence upon unconditional non-resistance as defined above. That the whole doctrine of Pacifism is—even apart from the context—a false inference from 'Resist not evil,' is manifest from what here follows.

(6) The whole practice of rigid literalism as applied to the New Testament in general, and the Sermon on the Mount in particular, is false and mischievous. The Catechism above specified says :—

> 'Is it certain that Jesus meant His words to be interpreted and acted upon literally?' (Answer) 'He says so Himself: "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven."'

But here are two things to be carefully noted. First, the pure assumption, begging the whole question, that 'the will of My Father' is unconditional Pacifism. Secondly, the self-contradiction, patent and unblushing, that these three words

> should be understood *literally*, as Christ taught, i.e. not to return evil for evil. *Evil should be resisted by all means*, but not by evil.

It is difficult to imagine a plainer self-contradiction than this. Christ's words are definitely, 'Resist not evil.' This is to be taken absolutely *literally*. Yet evil is to 'be resisted by all means.' But that is not taking literally. And so, for Pacifism, the dilemma remains. Either (i.) these words are to be taken literally, i.e. absolutely and unconditionally —in which case the Christianity that obeyed them would only bring disaster wherever it was practised. Or (ii.) they are to be interpreted in some other way—in which case the whole plea for literalism goes by the board.

(7) Nor does the interpretation here offered, in the least warrant the pietistic delusions of Pacifism. 'That is—not to return evil for evil.' What Christian wants to do so, or seeks to do it? No genuine disciple of Jesus Christ. But Pacifism has no right whatever to assume that physical injury is always and necessarily evil. Taken with this crass literalness, it is always injurious to a human body to put a knife into it. But the work of the skilled surgeon is not injury, either physically or morally. If a surgical operation fails and the patient dies, does any one accuse the surgeon of murder, or of cruelty?

To say, therefore, with all the air of finality, that 'Christ's obvious doctrine is, Resist not personal injury with personal injury,' is as false and mischievous as it is, like all such sweeping conclusions, easily said. These points have to be noted. (i.) This is not to take Christ's words literally, but to put upon them an interpretation from without. (ii.) This interpretation is really a question-begging assumption. (iii.) This assumption is a serious instance of intellectual and moral confusion. Thus: The 'personal injury' here contemplated is plainly physical injury. But why is the physical injury—inflicted by some blackguard on the high road, or a German soldier outraging a woman, or an inhuman brute who murders a little child—evil? Not only because of the suffering endured by the victim, but because that suffering was intended, desired, aimed at, by the evil-doer. But assuming that a Christian man in any such case defends the victim and strikes down the aggressor, that physical injury is not evil. It is not moral wrong. First, because there is no desire nor intention to injure the aggressor, beyond what is absolutely necessary to prevent his evil deed. Secondly, because its real intention is not to inflict unnecessary suffering upon any one, but to preserve some one from suffering. (iv.) Such an intention is good, not evil; and if it can be shown that the physical means adopted to compass that end—*whatever they are*—were really inevitable, they are abundantly justified on Christian lines. For right is sacred as against wrong, and life is sacred as against death. It becomes, therefore, solemn duty to preserve, and if necessary to defend both, in any

way which is made necessary by the occasion. The physical injury which is absolutely necessary to prevent a madman, or a villain, from accomplishing their vile intention, is morally right, and therefore, on Christian principles, quite justified.

(8) It is a poor and false kind of interpretation which makes Christ contradict Himself. When He said—

> Think not that I came to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a sword (Matt. x. 34).—He that hath no sword, let him sell his cloak and buy one (Luke xxii. 36),

at least He meant something definitely contrary to the 'literal' rendering of 'Resist not evil.' No thoughtful Christian would dream of using these passages as 'justifying all the devilry of war.' But equally no man has the right, in the Christian name, to rule them out of account, as having no bearing on the relation of Christian principles to war.

(9) That such unconditional, literal, and universal non-resistance, was not intended by Christ to be attached to His words, is manifest from His other words and deeds. He declared that His mission was

> to announce release to the prisoners of war—to send away free those whom tyranny has crushed.

But if it be sometimes true that such deliverance may be effected by gentle means, most assuredly it is not always so. As witness His own declaration on another occasion, that :—

> It is inevitable that hindrances should come, but woe to the man by whom they come ; it would be well for him

> to have a millstone hung round his neck and be flung into the sea, rather than prove a hindrance to one of these little ones.[1]

One may suggest that that sentence, at all events, could hardly be carried out without some 'personal injury.'

(10) No contradiction of the mechanical literalness which Pacifism seeks to attach to 'Resist not evil,' could be more direct or emphatic, than that exhibited by Christ Himself, as recorded in John's Gospel :—

> There He found seated inside the temple dealers in cattle, sheep, and pigeon, also money-changers. Making a scourge of cords He drove them all, sheep and cattle together, out of the temple, scattered the coins of the brokers, and upset their tables, and told the pigeon-dealers—'Away with these.'[2]

No one has ever said that this, His action, 'justifies all the devilry of war.' But it does settle for ever the question whether He intended His words, 'Resist not evil,' to be taken in Tolstoyan literalness. The means employed by Him were comparatively gentle, being sufficient for His purpose. But how far He would have gone, had it been necessary, is sufficiently manifest from the words in Luke's Gospel cited above.

(11) To say that He Himself died simply and solely to illustrate and enforce the doctrine of non-resistance, is false to all the rest of the New Testament. Into any theological theory of the Atonement it is neither possible nor necessary to enter here. It is enough to say that His great self-sacrifice,

[1] Luke xvii. 2 (Moffatt). [2] John ii. 13–16 (Moffatt).

even unto death, stands for much more—both according to His own statements and those of the Apostles—than mere non-resistance to the Jewish mob. All that it illustrated, in this regard, was His voluntary submission to the personal suffering which resulted from His teaching. There was no intended emphasis upon non-resistance. It was the fulfilment to the utmost of His own 'first great command'; but it made no reference to the second. Does any one suppose for a moment that if the crowd had set upon Mary, His mother, as the German brutes have done upon the poor women of Belgium and Poland, Jesus Himself, or John, to whom He committed her, would have stood by and done nothing to rescue or protect her, but have allowed them to murder her without resistance? To lay down, in His name, the law that a husband, a father, a brother, a lover,

> cannot kill, maim, or otherwise absolutely injure any human being in personal self-defence, or for the sake of his family, or anything or any one he holds dear,

is sheer blasphemy, alike against the mind and heart of Jesus, and against all the most strong and tender and holy instincts which are divinely implanted in human nature. If Christianity really meant that a man must stand by in cowardly non-interference whilst his mother, his wife, his sister, his beloved, were treated as young girls and women have been treated at Louvain, Aerschot, Dinant, Tremonde, and numberless other places by the Kaiser's hordes, then it would deserve all the execrations of its bitterest opponents.

(12) That the Apostles did not go to such fanatical extremes in their teaching of Christ's love, is sufficiently shown in their whole attitude. Take one word only now :—

> Whoever does not provide for his own relatives, and particularly for his own family, has repudiated the faith : he is worse than an unbeliever.[1]

In the light of the Pacifist extreme above quoted, we cannot but ask what 'providing' for one's own family really means. The fact that the Apostle was then only contemplating ordinary daily necessities, does not lessen our responsibility for the total well-being of those dependent on us. Protection from injury is as pressing a necessity, under some circumstances, as supplying food is under others. The means and methods of the protection must—if we are, as Jesus bade us be, 'Wise as serpents'—be determined by the necessities of the occasion.

(13) Pacifism ignores Christ's second great command, as really as it contemns the divinely-implanted instincts of self-preservation and defence of loved ones. Besides the influence of instinct, every man's life is to him a sacred trust. He has no more right, on Christian lines, to allow himself to be murdered, than to murder another. There may be special occasions, as sublime exceptions, when the lofty ideal is fulfilled—'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' And this ideal is being now fulfilled on our behalf, by our hero soldiers and sailors—so that to unchristianize them for what they are doing, is as base

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 8 (Moffatt).

ingratitude as it is false representation. But under all ordinary circumstances every man is bound to estimate his life at the highest, and preserve it to the utmost possible. Hence, also, if he loves his fellow man as himself, he is under solemn obligation to do all in his power to save his fellow's life, and protect him from any injury which he would himself avoid. Pacifists are ever ready to belaud the good Samaritan. But can any one suppose that if he had arrived at that spot somewhat earlier, when the villains were in the act of wounding and half-killing their victim, and if he had simply stood by with verbal lamentations, without any forceful effort to protect him, that the Master would have said then, 'Go, and do thou likewise'?

(14) But there is more which must be said, for truth's sake. This much-belauded principle of 'non-resistance' is unmistakably based upon the literal acceptance and mechanical interpretation of the three words so often quoted. Upon this principle in general, it is time to point out three things plainly.

The first is, that it would inevitably reduce the whole New Testament to nonsense. Our Christian Scriptures are, after all, Eastern writings. As such, they abound in figures decidedly more than our modern Western speech—though we ourselves employ every day figurative language which, if taken literally, would consign us to asylums. But if literalism be applied to one phrase or one discourse, so must it in all honesty be to the rest. What, then, would ensue? We are asked, persistently, 'did not Jesus mean what He said?' The answer is in every sincere inquirer's hands. Jesus

always assumed intelligence and sincerity in His hearers. 'Yea, and why even of yourselves do you not judge what is right?' was His remonstrance to those who misunderstood and misrepresented Him. So that if we are to take His words—'If any man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also'—in utter and childish literalness, we must treat similarly all His other expressive utterances.

It would require many pages to illustrate this fully. Let us be content with a couple of typical instances. On one occasion it is reported that He turned to the inquisitive and superficial crowd at His heels and said:—

> If any one comes to Me, and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, aye, and his own life, he cannot be a disciple of Mine.[1]

This is the place to ask—did He mean what He said? And if this also is to be taken literally, do Pacifists really hate all those who should be nearest and dearest, as well as their own lives?

Or again; the Fourth Gospel reports that on another occasion, discussing with the Jews, Jesus said:—

> Truly, truly, I tell you unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you—for My flesh is real food, and My blood is real drink. He who feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood remains within Me, as I remain within him. He who feeds on Me will also live by Me.[2]

Here, then, also—did He mean what He said? And if so, taken as Pacifism takes Matt. v. 39, why do

[1] Luke xiv. 26 (Moffatt). [2] John vi. 53–57 (Moffatt).

not all Pacifists at once join the Romish Church, which alone professes to do this literally? It should surely suffice to say that any principle of interpretation which thus wrecks the whole New Testament—for there are numberless instances of the same principle—is its own condemnation.

(15) Even if that were not enough, however, there can be no justification for a principle which makes Christ Himself flatly contradict His own precepts. Thus in the Mount Sermon He is reported as saying :—

> Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council ; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire !

But when, later on in the same Gospel, Jesus is rebuking the Scribes and Pharisees, He Himself says :—

> Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater the gold or the temple ?

Is there any need of other instances ?

(16) There is, however, special need to point out that those who most vehemently urge this literalness as the basis of the only real Christianity, are themselves far from acting upon it in other cases. Even if three chapters in Matthew were taken as the whole Gospel, certainly Pacifism is not true to them in the sense it seeks to put upon verse 39.

Let us turn, for illustration, to other utterances close by. Verse 29 says :—

> If your right eye is a hindrance to you, pluck it out and throw it away. And if your right hand is a hindrance to you, cut it off and throw it away.

Is there any instance on record of any Pacifist actually doing either of these?

Again, verse 34 says :—

> It was said in old time, Thou shalt not swear falsely—but I tell you not to swear at all.

Some few Quakers, we know, have adhered to the literalness of this, but does Pacifism in general act upon it?

And if the members of the Society of Friends are here to be held blameless, and considered consistent, we must yet listen again. For other utterances to be taken literally are these :—

> Give to him that asks of thee, and from him that would borrow, turn not thou away.

Or if we take Luke's variant :—

> Give to every one that asks of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.—Love your enemies and do good, and lend without hoping for any repayment.
>
> Store up no treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust corrode, where thieves break in and steal.

If there is any 'Friend' who is prepared to carry out literally the first of these quotations, many poor preachers will be most glad to hear from him. For not a few pastors of churches are hit quite as hard by this vile war as men of business. As for the second, viz. whether there have been, or are, any wealthy members of the 'Quaker' persuasion, it needs not, surely, that one should mention names. Pacifism may safely be challenged to produce many

of its advocates who can say, with John Wesley—'I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence. But in every other respect my own hands will be my executors.' There is really no risk of unkind exaggeration in saying that—on literal lines—there is not a single consistent Pacifist living in modern Britain.

(17) Another plain failure of Pacifism appears in this, that it does not really face either the facts of the case, or their consequences.

As to facts. Pacifists, like other mortals, eat and drink; they also appreciate and use their liberty. But they altogether ignore the fact that they owe the very opportunities of advocating, either by speech or print, their special views, to the ceaseless labours and fightings of those whom they condemn. If it were not for Sir John Jellicoe and his fully-armed and determined comrades, Britain would be starving in three weeks; and in another three be overrun by ruthless hordes, who are burning to do to this country far worse devilries than have been done to Belgium. This we have from their own lips.[1] Whatever else Pacifism is, it is the incarnation of ingratitude. It is easy enough to print, in this army-and-navy-protected land that:—

> There is passive resistance; there is an active righteous moral resistance—a meek, firm, remonstrance, rebuke, reproof, protestation; there is an active, firm, compound moral and physical resistance, uninjurious to the evil-doer, and only calculated to restrain him from deadly violence or extreme outrage.

[1] I have given specimens in the two other books entitled *Britain Justified* and *Plain Truths versus German Lies* (C. H. Kelly, London).

But such statements are really worse than childish. A child's innocent prattle is pleasing, because it knows nothing more. But why do not these writers and speakers consult the blue and yellow and white books which show that all that is urged here, with such seeming simplicity, had been tried for days and weeks and months, and it was *only when all these had failed* that, in this war at the very least, our statesmen were driven to do something more than rebuke and reprove and protest.

If British Pacifists lived in a country like Germany, where, since the war began, twelve hundred newspapers have been suppressed, and where for years before the war, the mailed fist of the State has crushed every protest against war, it is possible —though doubtful—that they might learn, as Jesus Himself acknowledged, that there are times when expostulation is useless. Poetry is often very moving, but to recite Shakespeare to a mad dog, would be about as effective as to make 'a meek and firm remonstrance' to a nation led by statesmen, war-lords, generals, merchants, philosophers, theological professors (*sic*), who are truthfully represented in this one delightful specimen from Lieutenant-Colonel Kaden :—

> Let every German, man or woman, young or old, find in his heart a Bismarck column, a pillar of fire of hate, now in these days of storm and stress. Let this fire enkindled in every German breast be a fire of joy of holiest enthusiasm. But let it be terrible, unfettered; let it carry horror and destruction. Call it hate. Let no one come to you with 'Love thine enemy.' We all have but one enemy, England.

(18) But the consequences of this spirit have also to be reckoned with. To most people, the dropping

of deadly bombs from the sky on defenceless towns, for no military purpose but simply to kill anybody and everybody, seems too dastardly a method for any nation to adopt. But Zeppelin raids have been endured, and have yet to be expected. The deliberately-planned sinking, without reason or warning, of four great ocean liners, for the sole purpose of seeing how many innocent non-combatants they could kill, is the actual result of the ceaseless inculcation of the above hate, and as such is welcomed with fiendish exultation throughout Germany. If any one would know how British prisoners are treated, he has only to read what Sir Conan Doyle has carefully proved and deliberately printed. If facts can make the reader's soul sick, then he will be nauseated indeed. Yet all that is there narrated will not approach, for damnableness and horror, those deliberate and officially-attested findings which are printed in Lord Bryce's Report, concerning the expression of the real German spirit in Belgium. Surely, to suggest that all that is there represented could be wisely and effectively dealt with by ' meek and firm remonstrance,' is as senseless as to sing psalms to a great city fire, instead of working the fire engines. Or as it would be to do what Eddyism bids us—send out copies of the incoherent rhapsody called *Science and Health*, instead of skilled surgeons and trained nurses, to deal with the tragic hosts of our desperately-wounded and pitiably-' gassed ' soldiers.

(19) In one plain word, Pacifism, carried through as literally as its advocates urge, would simply mean the wreck and ruin all round of everything that makes life worth living, or civilization worth

any further maintenance. Three estimates from public teachers who have every right to be considered Christian, may be well noted. In Westminster Abbey, Bishop Boyd Carpenter asked plainly :—

> Is there any difference between a mad man and a mad nation? I trow not. We restrain a mad man in his own interests as well as in the interest of others. When a nation with false ideas of force and a false conception of its call rode roughshod over other nations, it was time that the sane nations of the world should bind the insane forces which had been set against humanity.

And all that is necessary for such binding becomes just as right, and worthy, and Christian, as the struggle and violence which are absolutely inevitable in holding down a patient suffering from delirium tremens.

In his excellent little booklet entitled *War, This War, and the Sermon on the Mount*, Canon Streeter has well said :—

> The subjugation of Belgium or the crushing of France does not merely mean some alterations of boundaries on a paper map. The happiness of millions for generations to come is at stake. Such phases cover an outrage to humanity and a calamity for civilization. If so, then to resist is essentially a Christian act; and if effective resistance is only possible through war, war, with all its horrors and iniquities, becomes a Christian duty.

And Mr. Lloyd Thomas has only spoken the truth in his forceful brochure[1] :—

> There are worse things than death; there is a deeper hell than war. A woman who, on the principle of non-resistance,

[1] *The Immorality of Non-Resistance*, p. 64 (Cornish Bros., Birmingham).

surrendered her chastity to the attack of the first ruffian that assaulted her, we should hold to be not virtuous but immoral. If she did not struggle and resist, even were it possible, unto death, we should know that she had betrayed the cause of womanly honour, and encouraged every sensualist in the world. Civilization is open to such attacks, and must not hesitate to resist them. Its purity, justice, honour, innocence, are ever being assailed by wickedness and treachery. If it declines to defend and protect itself, it is handing itself over, naked and weaponless, to the usage of armed and powerful brutality.

(20) The early and mediaeval Christian martyrs are often cited as typical examples of the non-resistance which all Christians ought to practise. But the reference is wholly misleading. For they had no chance or power of resistance. The only choice for them was between denying Christ altogether and throwing up their faith, or accepting resistless suffering and death. There was in their case nothing approaching the modern position. Their only consideration was adherence, or not, to their own convictions. But, as above shown, there is to-day a whole world of consequences waiting upon the decision, as to whether modern Prussian militarism and German tyrannic pride are to wreak their evil will upon Europe and humanity. It is now very far indeed from being a mere matter of personal conviction. The fate of Europe, and indeed of the future of the human race, turns upon the question whether might is to be taken for right, whether morality is to hold between nations, whether coming generations are to groan helplessly under a military yoke, or to enjoy the liberties and opportunities which are indispensable to human progress.

(21) Much is said about the suffering which is

caused—as in the case of Belgium—by the resistance of evil. Why not rather do as Luxemburg did—let things go as they may, without remonstrance? To which there are two answers. First, that peace at any price, is alike unchristian and immoral. Safety purchased at the price of dishonour, is unworthy of any moral being, or any righteous nation. War is not the greatest human calamity, any more than pain is the greatest evil. As long as men are above beasts, it will be better to be true, and suffer for it, than to be at ease through falsity. But, secondly, whatever the pain and anguish which the resistance to evil brings in its train, the responsibility for all that, lies not with the resister, but with the one—whether man or nation—who makes such resistance both a moral and physical necessity. As already quoted :—

> It is inevitable that hindrances should come, but woe to the man by whom they come.

Never in the words of Christ or His Apostles is that woe misplaced, or transferred to those who suffer in striving to resist and remove the hindrances.

(22) The particular method of resistance, out of which Pacifism makes so much dramatic capital, is quite morally irrelevant. It has to be decided by the occasion, and by the motives of aggressor and resister. The sensational inquiry, 'How can it be right to bayonet or shoot a man?' is of precisely the same moral quality—pointed out above—as to ask whether it is right to put a knife into a man. If it be a vendetta stab, it is certainly wrong, for the purpose is vindictive. If it be the cut of the

surgeon, no matter how deep, it is undoubtedly right, for the purpose is benevolent. However gruesome, tragic, dreadful, is the soldier's task in the trenches, the whole responsibility for it rests with those in command. And their righteousness or wickedness depends upon the motives which bring them there, and decide the orders they issue.

(23) There is unquestionably something revolting not only to the Christian mind, but to all our best human instincts, in the employment of the deadly methods of wholesale destruction which modern knowledge has made possible. The carnage wrought by machine guns, howitzers, bombs dropped from the sky, torpedoes shot from submarines, and the like, is horrible enough in very deed. But it is a case which comes wholly within the scope of Christ's own precepts. With definite emphasis He bids us :—

> Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement—Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and guileless as doves.

Not by sensation or sentimentality, but on right principles, must all such developments be estimated. If it be right to resist evil, it is not only right but necessary, to do so in the only way which is effectual. To protest against 'doing evil that good may come,' is in such case sheer question-begging. For it is *not* 'doing evil.' It is doing what wisdom, so often termed 'common sense,' shows to be inevitable. If a malefactor threatens me, or those whom I am bound to defend, with words and a feather, with feathery words I may well meet him. But if I know that he is coming with a Browning's automatic

pistol to murder those dearest to me, then, on sane lines, the choice is plain. I must either allow him to do just what he pleases, or I must find some such means of resistance to his vile intentions, as will enable me to do effectively what I am convinced ought to be done. It is really the simplest choice upon which the most tremendous issues hang. If a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing properly. The first thing to be done with a maniac running amok, is to stop his deadly work. If it can be done gently, then let it be so. But if it can only be done by shooting him, then he must be shot. The principle is no less true of nations, however vast and tragic the consequences.

(24) The conclusion, therefore, to which we are driven, is that the ideal of non-resistance, as an interpretation of Matt. v. 39, is as false as doubtless it is often sincere; as mischievous as it may be well meant. It seems to be ever necessary in this world to guard against the errors of the good. All the most dreadful things in Church history have been done by sincere fanatics. Pious exaggeration and fanatic misrepresentation have done Christianity more harm than all its foes. In the present case, the true and sufficient interpretation of Christ's whole doctrine as to dealing with evil can never be better put than by Paul:—

> If it be possible, as much as depends on you, be at peace with all men. If your enemy hunger, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink, for in this way you will make him feel a burning sense of shame. Do not let evil get the better of you; get the better of evil by doing good.[1]

[1] Rom. xii. 20, 21 (Moffatt).

'If it be possible'—but it is not always possible, for us any more than for Christ or the Apostles. As to caring kindly for our enemy, this country is doing that in thousands of cases—far removed from the abominable treatment of our countrymen exposed by Sir Conan Doyle and many others. But it is alike childish, foolish, and false, to assume that 'doing good' can and must always and only mean doing to others that which is painless and pleasing. It is simply untrue that all infliction of physical injury is evil. When it is urged that 'to resist crime by crime cannot be Christian,' one may well reply, 'No more is it Christian to beg the question under a plea of discussion.' For the very thing most strenuously denied by non-Pacifists, is that it is 'crime' to resist crime. Rather they affirm that it must be virtuous, always, to resist vice. To let any evil-minded, vile-intentioned aggressor have all his own way, is not good. It is the worst form of badness. For it is to harm him, as well as to allow him to harm others. Even as on the small scale of family life, to give a peevish, selfish child all he cries or fights for, is not to bless but to curse both the child and the family. It is no less true of a nation. When, therefore, Pacifism claims to put its special pleading into an aphorism, and says that—'Evil should be resisted by all means, but not by evil,' it first gives away completely its whole case, and then simply asserts what is demonstrably untrue. Jesus said, 'Resist not evil.' Pacifism insists that those words must be taken literally. Then the 'literal' taking of them is said to be that 'evil should be resisted by all means'! If that is not self-contradiction, then

there is none anywhere in literature. Furthermore, to assume that all non-Pacifists desire or recommend to resist evil 'by evil,' is nothing less than slander. For they do nothing of the kind. Their contention is that it must necessarily be good to resist evil; and that the ways and means by which evil is resisted, come under the jurisdiction of common sense or reason, which is, as Bishop Butler avowed, 'the candle of the Lord within us.'

In this regard, as has been pointed out elsewhere, the older version of the Bible is responsible for much misunderstanding. The angels never sang 'peace on earth, and goodwill to men.' Indiscriminate peace is, Jesus Himself plainly declared, no part of His Gospel. The true message is:—

> Glory to God in the highest heavens,
> And on earth peace among men who please Him.[1]

Such a word, when interpreted in the light of facts, entirely warrants the attitude taken by Mr. Lloyd Thomas in his booklet:—

> With a full sense of the gravity of what I am saying, I assert that the doctrine of non-resistance, when advocated as of universal and unconditional application, is an anti-social, immoral, and unchristian doctrine. The fact that it works in some instances, and works with extraordinary and complete success, is no reason for shutting our eyes to its disastrous futility in other instances. It is not of universal application. There are innumerable crises where it fails, and fails pitiably. Christ never meant it to to be of universal application, in an imperfect and unregenerate world. Though we may admire the heroism and love the spirit of many of those who hold this doctrine to be

[1] Luke ii. 14 (Weymouth).

of absolute and universal validity, we must not shrink from the painful duty of saying that their moral teaching in this particular, were it actually put into practice to-day, would plunge all that civilization has won through centuries of sacrifice and agony and travail, down into the black night of crime, and lust, and devilry.[1]

[1] p. 64.

IV

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE

THE purpose of these pages is regretfully but inevitably negative. The positive attitude of Christian Churches which do not accept Pacifism, is sufficiently expounded by so many abler teachers, as to render it unnecessary to do more in closing this brochure than submit a mere outline.

The non-Pacifist accepts and seeks to obey Christ's injunction, 'Love your enemies,' quite as sincerely as any avowed Pacifist. But nothing in the whole realm of religion or of literature admits of and requires such discriminating interpretation as 'love.' Would any one, save a hopeless fanatic, suggest that this precept was intended to mean that every Christian man should feel towards all good people—let alone all rogues and social parasites—as he does to his own wife and children? From dawn to noon there are innumerable and indescribable degrees of light. But love is as capable of degrees as light, for it is indeed the light of the heart. Assuredly Jesus did not love the Scribes and Pharisees as He loved His mother. 'Christian love,' well says Canon Streeter, 'is not primarily emotional.' Love may be real, and yet non-emotional, negative, and pain-inflicting. So that to

love enemies is honestly obeyed, as a Christian maxim, when we seek to cultivate discrimination, fairness, magnanimity, pity, kind intention, whilst at the same time doing everything in our power to frustrate their efforts to do us or others injury.

> If the soldier is convinced that with the cause for which he is fighting, is involved the welfare of humanity as a whole, including therefore in the long run that of Germany also, he can not only shoot the German in the trenches opposite without any feeling of personal dislike, but he can do so for the love of man. And this is not only possible, but it is what in nine cases out of ten is actually being done.[1]

Happily there is not in this country, anything like the venomous hate against us which so lamentably and unjustly prevails in Germany. But it needs great Christian self-discipline to keep in check the indignation which German vile deeds cannot but occasion. Here is ample scope for the reality of Christian love. It is best helped by cultivating the pity which Jesus Himself so sublimely expressed in His prayer—'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Besides this, the true Christian attitude must include a careful and painstaking acquaintance with the facts of the case, so far as can be obtained, in order to avoid false judgements. Certainly, also, there is unmeasured room for a better understanding of New Testament principles generally. The lamentable practice of picking out short 'passages,' or even half-sentences, and using them for doctrinal or controversial purposes, irrespective of their context, cannot be too strongly condemned,

[1] *War, this War, and the Sermon on the Mount* (Canon Streeter), p. 16.

for it has done, and is yet doing, incalculable harm to Christ's kingdom on this earth.

There need be no difficulty, as there ought to be no cessation, in prayer, during these critical times. The objections not seldom heard are as pitiful as unwarranted. It is as Christianly possible and natural to pray that the German aims may be defeated, as that the German nation may be saved from itself and yet purified and ennobled by the working of nobler principles. All too well we know that we as a nation, equally with our Allies, are very far from being perfect in righteousness and love. Whilst there yet rests upon us the dreadful necessity of waging this war to such a finish as shall prevent the possibility of any nation plunging Europe again into a similar Maelström, it must be acknowledged that there are very many wrongs which must be righted in our own midst. How, or when, the present fearful struggle will end, no man can say. Nor can statesmen as yet predict what alterations will have to take place in the marking out of the international lines of territory, when peace is signed.

But it is certain that throughout these realms there will be more need than ever before, for all that Christian reality, alike in individuals and in churches, can contribute to the common good. We shall need clear convictions, sincere prayers, genuine devotion, to the very uttermost. The pressing problems and possible dangers of the immediate future are almost appalling. Yet there are also many cheering features in the outlook. The unexpected outburst of loyalty and devotion to the mother-country from our colonies, has demonstrated the solidarity of the

British Empire, beyond all doubt or fear. The free response of our noblest sons to the call of duty, has shown that we are far indeed from being a 'decadent' nation. General Botha's wonderful stand in South Africa, has opened out vast possibilities for the future of that great realm. The silent but ceaseless guarding of these shores by our noble navy, gives us not only protection now, but splendid guarantee of immunity, in the days to come, from all the horrors of invasion. We may yet hope that in this country, as in America, our standing army may be safely reduced to a minimum, rather than develop a British militarism. It is, moreover, true beyond question, both that a painful, tragic, chastening check has been given to the tendency to selfish superficiality and frivolity which was ominously increasing before the war, and that after the war those who have faced all its risks and strains and sufferings, will come back to deepened thoughts and sobered lives. The fearful cost, indeed, of this wild orgy of passion, will only gradually be realized in myriads of darkened homes. But out of such darkness there may emerge a purer and brighter light than could ever come from the unbroken continuance of prosperity, or surfeiting with luxury. Mutual sympathy developed on all hands and between all classes, through common suffering, will do more towards bringing to pass the greatest blessing of the greatest number, than any rising tide of commerce, or all the delights of sports. Tennyson has put much truth into few words in his representation of a reply to the man who feared the Continent :—

'God bless the narrow seas—
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.'
'Have patience,' I replied, 'ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth.
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half science, fill me with a faith,
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
To learn its limbs—there is a Hand that guides.'

The Christianity which is to embody that guidance, will certainly not be based upon three words, taken from anywhere, but will fully respond to the whole noble ideal of its most devoted early advocate :—

> Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovable, whatever is of good repute, if there is anything really noble or deserving of praise, take all these into full account.[1]

And having all his life practised what he preached, he might well add, as a message to modern Europe, even more than to ancient Philippi :—

> All that you learned and received from me, as well as heard from my lips and saw in my life, these things be always doing, and the God of peace will be with you.

[1] Phil. iv. 8.

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